

### *Vision: Civic Infrastructure*

*We envision a wall-less “community of unity” providing opportunities that engage citizens to mobilize their potential and abilities for building a community of culture.*

#### **Community Concerns**

Community residents expressed a strong desire to improve their abilities to work together in solving the array of economic and social problems affecting their neighborhoods. Discussion on this issue emerged as part of the community’s assets and needs analysis (SWOT analysis) and resulted in the formation of a working group on civic infrastructure. Residents expressed a number of needs, including:

- Improve the relationships among Zone residents and neighborhoods
- Strengthen the abilities of neighborhood organizations to do community development
- Exert more control over public safety matters
- Engage local churches and other faith-based organizations in community activities
- Connect residents, particularly youth, with cultural assets and the arts
- Build resident’s self-esteem and leadership skills
- Enhance local mentoring efforts
- Help others understand and appreciate the cultural assets of inner-city neighborhoods

#### **Baseline: Existing Conditions**

These concerns, as expressed by residents, are reflected in the following demographic data that measures isolation from the community and mainstream social system. These factors tend to limit the participation of Zone residents in civic life.

- *There are a large number of households where household heads do not have a support system*—Twenty-eight percent of Zone households are single persons

households and 43% are female headed with no husband present.

- *Many Zone teens are not in school*—44% of all Zone adults are not high school graduates, and only 29% of all 9<sup>th</sup> graders who enter Taft High School in the Zone graduate.
- *Many Zone households are dependent on public assistance and not connected to the world of work*—In June 1998 there were 1,214 TANF assistance groups (households) in the Zone. These represent 18% of all TANF cases in Hamilton County, although the Zone population is only 6% of the county total.
- *Zone residents lack accessibility to community and regional activities*—Fifty percent of Zone households do not have a vehicle available.
- *Zone residents have safety concerns which may limit participation in community activities*—Although comprising only 14% of the City population 34% of all arrests for serious crimes and 34% of all citizen calls for police service were in the Zone.

#### **Foundations for Change**

Despite the needs and challenges to building the civic infrastructure of the Zone, there are a number of organizations and programs that provide a foundation for change. The following represent a sample of these community assets:

- *Community Councils*—Since the 1970s, Cincinnati citizens have participated in a formalized structure of neighborhood governance that is community-based and driven, with support from city government. Today there is a total of 51 incorporated Councils with each engaging in a democratic process to select their leadership. Over the years, their links to city government have developed, and they now provide formalized

input on the budgeting process, zoning and planning matters, and the disposition of local property.

- **Neighborhood-Based Organizations**– Zone neighborhoods, as well as all of Cincinnati, are served by rich array of capable neighborhood-based organizations. These groups provide a variety of services to benefit community residents and provide an important mechanism for helping the community work together on important economic and social matters. Many groups, which include residents, businesses, developers, service providers and churches, exist in each neighborhood. These organizations serve as a forum to engage many citizens across the community and as an advocacy base for neighborhood issues.
- **Xavier University Community Building Institute**–During the last four years, leading Cincinnati institutions have come together to develop and establish the Capacity Building Institute (CBI). Headquartered at Xavier University, the Institute is based on John McKnight's asset-based community development model, and provides training and technical assistance services to residents and organizations serving Cincinnati's poorest neighborhoods. The CBI has worked in a number of neighborhoods included in the proposed EZ boundaries.
- **Strong Faith-Based Community**– Cincinnati has a diverse array of faith-based organizations that involve individuals from all walks of life. The faith-based organization remains an institution in the community where the young and old, white and black, and professional and unemployed can interact. Cincinnati's congregations are engaged in a variety of economic and social matters as they serve as forums to address issues and to deliver services within the community.
- **Significant Cultural Assets**–Within the boundaries of the Zone and surrounding area is a multiplicity of cultural assets. Not only

does the community have its historical roots such as the Underground Railroad, the Zone is home to several major cultural institutions serving Greater Cincinnati such as the Cincinnati Symphony and the Cincinnati Music Hall.

- **Institutional Attention to Race and Cultural Relations**–Cincinnati has a number of strong local institutions that play important leadership roles in community race and cultural relations. These include the local chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Urban League of Greater Cincinnati and the Black Male Coalition.

### Directions for Change

The following are the Goals and Strategies for Civic Infrastructure developed by the Community Partners Group. These served to guide the group in their consideration and development of program initiatives.

1. **Empower Zone residents and organizations to take responsibility for the comprehensive development of their neighborhoods.**
2. **Increase the involvement of the faith community in addressing the development needs and opportunities of the Zone.**
3. **Harness the energies of the arts, culture and communications media for community building and economic development in the Zone**
4. **To focus community-wide resources on the needs of the Zone**

### Programs for Change

The Community Partners Group developed the following Five-Point Program to enhance the civic infrastructure within the Zone:

**1. *Neighborhood Engagement Training and Assistance***

Seeks to provide training and technical assistance for Zone residents and community organizations. The initiative will provide leadership training, community organizing, block club development and a host of other proactive steps in order to help residents to become more involved in civic and community activities and to strengthen the expertise and skills of existing neighborhood-based organizations. The effort will also assist communities in developing their own visions for the future and action plans to achieve those visions.

**2. *Faith in Community: "Neighbor to Neighbor"***

Uses the resources and expertise of the Zone's significant faith-based community to advance community partnerships and development activities. The initiative will establish a coalition of faith-based groups interested in working on community and development issues within the Zone and then connect members of the coalition to the ongoing development efforts of existing neighborhood organizations.

**3. *Community Media and Marketing Center***

Offers Zone residents access to communications and video technology to promote Zone cultural and art assets. The Center, which is to be a facility within the Zone, will offer services that include community-based programming, technical assistance and professional consultation on media/marketing issues, and access to the latest technology for marketing Zone goods, services and program activities. The Center will also provide commercial space for media and communication entrepreneurs.

**4. *Arts for All Program***

Provides Zone residents with the opportunity to access and participate in the diverse variety of artistic and cultural events taking place in the Zone and Greater Cincinnati region. Zone neighborhoods will be assisted by a staff person who will facilitate the development and use of cultural activities by residents. In addition, Zone residents will be provided with enhanced access to cultural activities throughout the region.

**5. *Urban Workforce Exchange Program***

Offers workers and employers a forum to address personal and community issues through their workplace. This initiative will promote the concepts of civic participation, cultural diversity and racial equality among employed residents and their employers. It will also provide a means for workers and employers to gain greater cultural sensitivity among themselves and as key stakeholders in the community.

### Program Descriptions

#### 1. *Neighborhood Engagement Training and Assistance*

This initiative serves as the community training and capacity building program for the Zone. It offers training for Zone residents, community organizations and others participating in the EZ effort. It is also designed to provide training for a number of key programs identified in the strategy: neighborhood participants in the “No Place Like Home” initiative, residents in the “Campaign for a Safe Community” initiative, and participants in the “Faith In Community” program. In addition, leadership and community development training will also be provided for all members of the Cincinnati Empowerment Corporation, the Zone governing body. The initiative also will provide technical assistance for organizational development and enhancement.

The training component of this initiative is divided into two parts. The first part—**Citizen Engagement**—targets residents and participants who are poised to become engaged in some Zone activity such as block clubs or community visioning. The second part targets residents who are disenfranchised from the community and provides them life skills and self-esteem training in an effort to position them to subsequently participate in civic activities.

**Citizen Engagement** provides hands-on, practical training for residents from all Zone neighborhoods and organizations in the practice of asset-based community development and community organizing. The training offers participants a set of tools to identify, organize and mobilize community resources/assets and to sustain citizen involvement. At least five different training modules will be used for this component of the initiative:

- **Community Organizing**—The training focuses on teaching Zone residents facilitation, mobilization, and leadership skills so that they can work to bring more residents

into civic and community development activities;

- **Block Clubs**—Residents will be trained in the fundamentals of developing and maintaining block clubs in the neighborhoods. This will cover issues of recruitment, participation, leadership, community actions, advocacy, and sustainability, as well as the role of block clubs relative to other community organizations and government.
- **Conflict/Dispute Resolution**—Community leaders and residents will be trained in the essential steps of conflict/dispute resolution and negotiation. This training will be oriented to issues concerning group mobilization and operations, and interactions with other community/Zone stakeholders such as government, business and faith-based community.
- **Community Visioning**—Individuals, local institutions, and community associations will be trained in the process of discovering a community’s capacities, gifts, and assets that can be mobilized for development purposes (a.k.a. asset-based development).
- **Community and Economic Development**—Zone participants throughout the area will be provided with a set of introductory sessions on community economic development that cover substantive areas of housing, economic development, job training, and education, from the perspective of how local residents and groups can assist in the development process.

These modules and this type of training already exists in Cincinnati. As such, this component of the initiative will be delivered by the Community Building Institute (CBI), a four year old collaborative effort of Xavier University and the United Way & Community Chest of Cincinnati. CBI works with community groups to discover their strengths through asset-based community development and to assist them in taking action to improve their communities. Importantly, CBI provides its instruction at the neighborhood level. In just four years, CBI has conducted a number of projects in neighborhoods located in the Zone.

To complement the Citizen Engagement component of this initiative, a targeted training effort will be directed to those residents currently disenfranchised from the civic activities of the neighborhood. This effort will utilize the **Exodus Program** of Christ Emmanuel Christian Fellowship to provide life-skills and self-esteem training to 200 residents annually. The program builds self-esteem and enlightens participants about their individual self worth while providing tools need to set and achieve personal goals. It also provides instruction in communication skills and relationship building. Unique to this program is the use of volunteer mentors who are assigned to participants to assist them through all steps of the training. This program is related to the next program “Faith in Community” which is designed to enhance the role of the faith-based community in Zone.

The final aspect of this initiative, **Organizational Capacity Building**, is designed to provide specific training and technical assistance help to community organizations working within the Zone. The first element of this effort is to provide the technical resources necessary to follow through on the Civic Engagement training noted above. This will include, for example, working with residents to actually form and operate block clubs and to conduct community visioning projects. This effort will also include resources to assist to assist neighborhood groups, councils and others to build their capacity for Zone development work and to assist them on specific project activities.

#### ***EZ SSBG Goals/Options Achieved***

This program helps to achieve SSBG statutory goal (1), achieving and maintaining economic self-support, and program option (4) (A), services to promote community and economic development.

#### ***Implementing Partners***

The implementing partners for the program will be the Xavier University Community Building Institute and Christ Emmanuel Christian Fellowship.

#### ***Timetable for Implementation & Outcomes***

The following is the timetable for taking actions and producing outputs and outcomes to address the baseline conditions described at the beginning of this section:

##### ***Start-Up Actions:***

Implementing partner and governing board oversight committee:

- Review and finalize all Community Capacity Building training modules.
- Begin asset-mapping process.
- Identify and proceed with all individuals seeking to be Block Club captains in the Zone;
- Identify 5 collaborating neighborhood associations/community councils and 5 neighborhood business associations in the Zone.
- Identify 5 collaborating institutions in each Zone neighborhood, of which two are faith-based organizations.

##### ***Year 1-2 Outputs and Outcomes:***

- **Community organizing training**—30 Zone residents trained (2 or 3 per neighborhood and one representative from 30% of faith-based organizations annually).
- **Capacity Building**—150 Zone residents trained.
- **Block Club Development**—90 neighborhood block clubs established (10 per neighborhood).
- **Associations**—5 collaborating neighborhood associations/community councils and 5 collaborating neighborhood business associations in the Zone.
- **Institutions**—5 collaborating institutions in each Zone neighborhood, of which two are faith-based organizations.
- **Comprehensive Strategic Planning Training**—4 Zone neighborhoods and four Zone sub-neighborhoods.

### Year 3-10 Outputs and Outcomes:

- **Community Organizing Training Module**—180 Zone residents trained (20 Zone residents annually—2 to 3 residents per neighborhood—and one representative from 30% of faith-based organizations trained annually).
- **Capacity Building Training Module**—350 Zone residents trained, with the participation rate increasing at a rate of 10% per year.
- **Block Club Development**—800 neighborhood block clubs established (90 clubs per neighborhood). Block Club convention to celebrate Block Club initiatives held annually.
- **Associations**—50% neighborhood associations/community councils and 100% neighborhood business associations in the Zone.
- **Institutions**—50% collaborating institutions in each Zone neighborhood, of which 30% are faith-based organizations
- **Comprehensive Strategic Planning Training**—9 Zone neighborhoods and 2 Zone sub-neighborhoods within each Zone neighborhood.

### Partners

#### Lead:

- Christ Emmanuel Christian Fellowship
- Xavier University Community Building Institute

#### Others, in alphabetical order:

- ALLY
- Cincinnati Neighborhood Action Strategy, City of Cincinnati
- Citizens for Civic Renewal
- City of Cincinnati City Planning Department and Department of Neighborhood Services
- Community Investment Partners: Fifth Third Bank; United Way & Community Chest; Procter and Gamble Fund; The Greater Cincinnati Foundation;
- Grassroots Leadership Academy
- Greater Cincinnati foundations
- University of Cincinnati, DAAP
- Working in Neighborhoods
- Zone Community Councils, organizations and residents

### Two-Year Budget

Uses of Funds	
Training operations cost, Citizen Engagement (EZ & local)	\$ 400,000
Training operations cost, Exodus (EZ & local)	140,000
Technical assistance (EZ)	400,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 940,000</b>
Sources of Funds	
Xavier University Community Building Institute	\$100,000
Christ Emmanuel Christian Fellowship	60,000
EZ SSBG	780,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 940,000</b>

## **2. Faith In Community “Neighbor To Neighbor”**

Cincinnati is a community of churches. Throughout the region, and particularly in distressed inner-city neighborhoods, the church is a primary institution of the neighborhood and serves as a place for residents to address their spiritual needs and, increasingly, the economic, social and physical needs of their community.

This initiative responds in part to the vision of creating a “community of unity” by seeking to engage Cincinnati’s faith-based organizations in Zone activities. It is designed to create and continually develop a wide-ranging series of partnerships and vital relationships between faith-based organizations and existing community associations within the Zone. This initiative builds off the abundance of resources and expertise within the faith-based community and seeks to mobilize them in ways that can contribute directly to the process of community capacity building and development. The initiative is also designed to assist the faith-based community in expanding its focus and expertise from a deliverer of social services to an active participant in the community development process.

This initiative contains three actions for effectively engaging the faith-based community in Zone development activities. They are:

- **Zone Consortium of Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs)**—In order to fully capture the resources and expertise of Cincinnati’s faith-based community, a consortium will be formed of FBOs from within the Zone and across Greater Cincinnati. The Consortium will be dedicated to serving the development needs of Cincinnati’s Empowerment Zone.
- **Training**—Members and participants of the FBOs will be provided direct training in community and economic development matters. This will be done to insure that participants have the skills and expertise to work with others in the Zone on development projects (see previous initiative - NETA - on

community and economic development training).

- **Neighbor to Neighbor**—Specific actions will be taken to link the voluntary expertise and resources of FBOs to existing community organizations within the Zone. These linkages will focus on establishing long-term, on-going partnerships, as well as marshaling resources to address one time project needs.

### ***EZ SSBG Goals/Options Achieved***

This program helps to achieve SSBG statutory goal (1), achieving and maintaining economic self-support, and program option (4) (A), services to promote community and economic development.

### ***Implementing Partners***

This initiative will be developed by the staff of the Cincinnati Empowerment Corporation, who will facilitate the establishment of the Zone Consortium of Faith Based Organizations. Once formed, the Consortium will assume responsibility for implementing the Faith in Community program.

### ***Timetable for Implementation & Outcomes***

The following is the timetable for taking actions and producing outputs and outcomes to address the baseline conditions described at the beginning of this section:

#### ***Start-Up Actions:***

This initiative utilizes that capacities of existing organizations to undertake the proposed activities. As such, the following action steps will enable the program to be underway within the first four months of designation:

- Use the C.E.C. to facilitate the development of a Zone-based consortium of faith-based organizations.
- Develop an agenda for action.

#### ***Year 1-2 Outputs and Outcomes:***

Consortium of Faith-Based Organizations convenes, represents 25% of all faith-based organizations within the Zone, for the following:

- Two meetings annually for dialogue between consortium partners.
- Two meetings annually for dialogue with 35% of all Zone business and service providers.
- 20% of consortium partners actively participate in the missions of organizations and associations present in the Zone.

### *Year 3-10 Outputs and Outcomes:*

- Consortium includes 50% of all faith-based organizations within the Zone.
- Consortium implements three community development initiatives.
- 50% of all consortium partners actively participate in the missions of community organizations and associations present in the Zone.

### *Two-Year Budget*

Uses of Funds	
Program operating costs (EZ)	\$ 400,000
Training costs (EZ)	100,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 500,000</b>
Sources of Funds	
EZ SSBG	\$ 500,000

### *Partners*

#### **Lead for program development:**

- Cincinnati Empowerment Corporation

#### **Others, in alphabetical order:**

- Archdiocese of Cincinnati
- Baptists Ministers Conference of Cincinnati)
- Christ Emmanuel Christian Fellowship (CECF)
- Community Building Institute, Xavier University
- Continuing Education, University of Cincinnati
- Jewish Federation of Cincinnati

### **3. Community Media and Marketing Center**

The intent of this initiative is to provide Zone residents and organizations central access to low cost media resources in television, computers (Internet), radio, film and print communications in a consolidated location within the Zone. Such a center would be used to help improve communications within the Zone and across the Greater Cincinnati region. In doing this, the initiative would address both the civic matters of Zone organizations (including the operations and efforts of the Cincinnati Empowerment Corporation), as well as provide communication and marketing opportunities for Zone businesses.

Currently, the development of a Community Media and Marketing Center (CMMC) is still in its initial conceptual stage. Upon submission of this application, efforts are underway to secure/lease, at a nominal costs, an existing facility in the Zone that could be used for these purposes. It is difficult, however, to fully project the outcomes and budgets associated with obtaining and operating such a facility. (There are many variables that must be considered such as the equipment that might be available through a lease arrangement.)

A final decision as the feasibility of such an initiative should be made before EZ designation. Until that time, however, \$200,000 of EZ funds are being reserved to lease and/or operate such a facility for the first two years. Already, several local organizations have indicated their support for this initiative.

#### ***EZ SSBG Goals/Options Achieved***

This program helps to achieve SSBG statutory goal (2), achieving and maintaining self-sufficiency for residents, and program option (4) (A), services to promote community and economic development.

#### ***Implementing Partner***

Cincinnati Community Video is prepared to be the implementing partner for the Community



Media and Marketing Center should the initiative proceed.

#### *Two-Year Budget*

<b>Uses of Funds</b>	
Lease and operations (EZ)	<b>\$ 200,000</b>
<b>Sources of Funds</b>	
EZ SSBG	<b>\$ 200,000</b>

#### *Partners*

- Cincinnati Community Video
- Cincinnati Film Society

#### **4 Arts For All**

There are numerous artistic and cultural events in Greater Cincinnati; however, many Empowerment Zone residents do not reap the benefits that they offer. This contributes to isolation from the larger community and a lack of appreciation for the gifts Zone residents and organizations have to offer.

The arts also provide a vehicle for reaching sub-groups who feel alienated from prevailing mores of society. In such cases, arts become more than sources of enrichment—they can provide a “path” to a meaningful life for individuals whose outlook is otherwise bleak. Arts for All will enable Zone residents to access cultural opportunities and events at locations as close as a local community center, school or other building that provides an inviting atmosphere for participants.

CRC is pledging to support this effort through funding of a full-time "Arts for All" Program Coordinator and ten half-time Center Coordinators, one for each of the ten Recreation Centers in the Zone. Working with a neighborhood "Arts for All" Committee, a full program of education, performance, and creative expression will be made available to residents of all ages. The recreation centers will provide space for music, fine arts, crafts, dance, cultural awareness activities, and other activities according to community interests.

This initiative will also be directed toward helping to connect Zone residents to arts and cultural activities in the Greater Cincinnati area. Although some organizations conduct special outreach efforts, this effort will be focused on developing a more systematic approach to helping Zone residents access and use regional arts and cultural resources. One component of this effort will be an initiative called Arts/Starts. This will enable Zone residents to purchase tickets at reduced prices or obtain special packages to arts and cultural events. These efforts will be underwritten by local arts organizations or through corporate and schools sponsorships and foundation grants.

## ***EZ SSBG Goals/Options Achieved***

This program helps to achieve SSBG statutory goal (1), achieving and maintaining economic self-support, and program option (4) (A), services to promote community and economic development.

## ***Implementing Partner***

The implementing partner for Arts for All will be the Cincinnati Recreation Commission.

## ***Timetable for Implementation & Outcomes***

The following is the timetable for taking actions and producing outputs and outcomes to address the baseline conditions described at the beginning of this section:

### ***Start-Up Actions:***

In order to assure that the program is up and running within six months, the following action steps will be taken:

- Establish office center for administering program
- Organize Arts for All Coordinating Council with representation from all Zone communities, as well as from partner organizations
- Organize neighborhood Arts for All coordinating committees, representing a broad spectrum of residents to be served, in each Recreation Center.
- Implement Arts/Starts program.

### ***Year 1-2 Outputs and Outcomes:***

- At least 100 residents should receive admission to an art performance or function each year.
- Every Arts for All coordinating committee will have one or more art and cultural program functioning out of each Community Center.

### ***Year 3-10 Outputs and Outcomes:***

- At least 100 new Zone participants will receive admission to an arts performance or function each year.
- Every Arts for All coordinating committee will have five or more cultural art and cultural

programs functioning out of each Recreation Center.

## ***Two-Year Budget***

Uses of Funds	
Operations and staff (EZ & local)	\$1,000,000
Sources of Funds	
Cincinnati Recreation Commission	\$ 500,000
EZ SSBG	500,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,00,000</b>

## ***Partners***

### **Lead:**

- Cincinnati Recreation Commission

### **Others, in alphabetical order:**

- Art Force
- Art Links
- Arts Consortium
- ArtWorks
- Cincinnati Art Museum
- Cincinnati Ballet Company
- Cincinnati Institute of Fine Arts (Fine Arts Fund)
- Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra
- Cinergy Foundation
- Contemporary Dance Theater
- Corbett Foundation
- Fidelity Investments Charitable Gift Fund
- Greater Cincinnati Arts and Education Center
- Linton Music Series
- Madcap Puppet Theatre
- Ohio Arts Council
- Peaslee Community Center
- Scripps Howard Foundation
- University of Cincinnati

### 5. *Urban Workforce Exchange Program*

The Urban Workforce Exchange Program responds to the changing dynamics in the workforce and workplace where, increasingly, people of different ethnic, culture, gender, ages and socioeconomic status are expected to work together toward a common goal. Welfare-to-work has accelerated this growing trend, as will the successful workforce development efforts of the EZ program. The result is a workplace and community environment where people have different understandings and expectations of their roles and responsibilities, as well as their relationships to each other and to the community in general.

This initiative will address this issue by providing employers of Zone residents access to training and technical assistance designed to facilitate their understanding and acceptance of the cultural differences among workers. The focus will be on helping people to concentrate on the capabilities of individuals rather than cultural perceptions and to take actions that leverage the richness of diversity. The assistance will seek to utilize these understandings to improve workforce interactions and exchanges among all levels of workers (e.g., supervisors and entry-level staff) and to develop a common commitment to address community needs outside the workplace, particularly in the Zone. The desired end result is a “community of workers and employers” actively engaged in civic and development activities within the Zone.

Recent research has indicated that there are no well-developed models addressing this matter (see *Welfare to Wages: Strategies to Assist the Private Sector Employ Welfare Recipients*, C.S. Mott Foundation, Flint, Michigan, August 1998). As such, the Urban League of Greater Cincinnati proposes to develop the program model and deliver it to employers in the Greater Cincinnati area.

Key aspects of this model will include:

- Helping employers to identify, interpret and understand hiring issues relative to a resident’s background;

- Assisting front-line managers and supervisors to understand cultural, ethnic and socio-economic differences among workers and themselves;
- Group training for workers and employers that address diversity awareness, power and authority, cross-functional team building, role clarification, and effective communication and listening.
- Group assistance for workers and employers that help them jointly identify and target community activities in which they can direct their expertise and resources, and become significant partners engaged in the community.

Upon development of the curriculum, the Urban League will utilize its staff to engage employers across the region in this initiative. Staff will link with the staff responsible for the initiative “Partners for Workforce Competitiveness” in order to coordinate the outreach toward those firms that have agreed to make jobs available to Zone residents. It is expected that a number of employers will be participating in this effort within the first year of EZ designation.

#### *EZ SSBG Goals/Options Achieved*

This program helps to achieve SSBG statutory goal (1), achieving and maintaining economic self-support, and program option (4) (A), services to promote community and economic development.

#### *Implementing Partner*

The implementing partner for the Urban Workforce Exchange Program will be the Urban League of Greater Cincinnati.

#### *Timetable for Implementation & Outcomes*

The following is the timetable for taking actions and producing outputs and outcomes to address the baseline conditions described at the beginning of this section:

#### *Start-Up Actions:*

- Collect and review data in the Zone for characteristics of Zone residents life-skills
- Begin “360 degree analysis”.

- Establish the Urban Workplace Exchange Program.
- The Urban League, the implementing partner, will develop a training curriculum, in collaboration with Zone residents and employers of Zone residents, and administrative training provided by the institute.

### *Year 1-2 Output and Outcomes:*

- 200 Zone residents participate in the Urban Workplace Exchange Program
- 50 regional businesses participate in the initiative
- 25% (50) of participants obtain membership in a neighborhood civic/service association
- 25 participants go on to leadership development training through the Community Capacity Building program
- 150 front-line managers from Zone employers participate in program
- 20 chief operating officers/senior executives from the largest Zone employers participate annually in UWEP
- 25 participants annually engage in leadership development training
- UWEP participants hold 10% of total seats on the executive boards of key Zone associations
- The chief administrative officer from to community and civic/social associations and organizations participate annually in UWEP.

### *Year 3-10 Output and Outcomes:*

- 1,000 Zone residents participate in the Urban Workplace Exchange Program
- 25% (250) of participants obtain membership in a neighborhood civic/service association
- 100 participants go on to leadership development training (see initiative 1)
- 30 chief operating officers/senior executives from the largest Zone employers participate annually in UWEP
- UWEP participants hold 10% of total seats on the executive boards of key Zone associations

### *Two-Year Budget*

Uses of Funds	
Staff and operations (EZ & Urban League)	\$ 600,000
Curriculum development (EZ)	200,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 800,000</b>

Sources of Funds	
Urban League of Greater Cincinnati	200,000
EZ SSBG	600,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 800,000</b>

### *Partners*

#### **Lead:**

- Urban League of Greater Cincinnati

#### **Others, in alphabetical order:**

- Archdiocese of Cincinnati: Social Action & World Peace Office
- Cincinnati Public Schools, Cincinnati Board of Education
- Citizens for Civic Renewal
- Community Building Institute, Xavier University
- Continuing Education, University of Cincinnati
- DAAP, School of Planning, University of Cincinnati
- Greater Cincinnati foundations

*Cincinnati EZ Tax Utilization Plan*

Aggressive use of federal, state, and local tax incentive programs will ensure the successful implementation of the Cincinnati Empowerment Zone goals. These tax resources will directly empower both Zone residents and businesses to achieve the following:

- Increase the employment rate of Zone residents
- Maximize the use of vacant and underutilized land and buildings
- Increase the profitability of Zone businesses
- Eliminate substandard building conditions for all the Zone public schools
- Create a specialty educational institute in the arts

The City of Cincinnati requires that each community receiving an incentive use its “best efforts” to fill 75% of any new jobs with City residents. In addition, Cincinnati will require that each company receiving Cincinnati Empowerment Zone incentives use its “best efforts” to hire Zone residents for 50% of those new jobs.

This plan is organized into three sections: Federal Tax Credits, State and Local Tax Credits, and Cincinnati Empowerment Zone Development Sites. Examples are provided to illustrate the use of these resources to implement the Cincinnati Empowerment Zone initiatives.

***Federal Tax Credits***

The following five federal tax programs will be used in the Cincinnati Empowerment Zone to leverage existing local and state tax incentives:

***Tax-Exempt Bond Financing***

The Cincinnati Empowerment Zone is eligible for \$130,000,000 in tax-exempt bonding capacity. Proceeds from the sale of revenue bonds will be made available for development projects in the zone for businesses that pledge to repay the debt service. In addition to business retention and expansion, priority will be given to projects

involving the redevelopment of brownfield sites and vacant, tax delinquent, dilapidated, or underutilized commercial and industrial buildings within the zone. The revenue bonds will be authorized by the Port Authority for Brownfields Redevelopment (PABR) and administered by them and the Cincinnati Local Development Company (CLDC). An additional option is to use the existing cooperative relationship between the City of Cincinnati and Hamilton County in which bonds are reviewed by the Community Improvement Corporation and issued by Hamilton County.

- **Example**—The City of Cincinnati and Hamilton County received a US EPA Brownfields Pilot Grant to create an initiative to implement brownfield redevelopment in the area. The funds are restricted to planning and administration, setting up the PABR, the Advisory Board, site selection process, and environmental assessment of at least two sites. The Vine Street Dump, a seven acre site in Carthage, was the first site selected by the PABR. Pre-development work is underway to complete environmental assessments, market analysis, site planning, and identification of an end business user. PABR will use its bonding authority to issue tax-exempt, non-volume cap bonds to finance the redevelopment of the Vine Street Dump.

***Brownfields Cleanup and Redevelopment***

A business can deduct the cost of a qualified environmental clean-up within the tax year that cost is paid or incurred.

- **Example**—The owners of property identified in the Property Clearing House Program will be targeted as first priority participants in the brownfields clean-up and redevelopment programs. These businesses will be assisted by PABR staff working on the Zone Brownfields program.

### *Increased Section 179 Deductions*

A business can deduct a maximum of \$37,500 of the cost of the qualifying property in the year it is placed in service.

- **Example**—The proposed Community Bridges program will include a special section on the tax credit resources available within the Empowerment Zone. This information will be disseminated to existing businesses, included in the new regional marketing program sponsored by the Partnership for Greater Cincinnati. This regional marketing program is a three-state collaborative that includes the major utilities. The Partnership will reach national and international businesses interested in locating in or doing business with Zone businesses.

### *Welfare to Work and Work Opportunity Tax Credits*

A financial incentive, of up to \$3,500 per employee in the first year and \$5,000 per employee in the second year, is provided to businesses who hire welfare recipients.

- **Example:** Major new developments are under construction or planned within the Zone and region. Examples in the Zone include University of Cincinnati conference center and expansion of Children's Hospital. Paul Brown Stadium and the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center will be constructed on the central riverfront and a new Reds Baseball stadium will be constructed at an undetermined location. These construction jobs offer an exciting opportunity to increase the access to jobs for Zone residents. We expect to secure a number of first source interview agreements with construction contractors as well as identify contractor and supplier opportunities with Zone businesses. Use of the Welfare to Work tax credits will increase the employment levels for the Zone's former welfare recipients.

### *Qualified Zone Academy Bonds (QZAB)*

Local or state governments can issue bonds to permit public schools to raise funds for curriculum development or physical expansion. The City of Cincinnati and Hamilton County have committed to \$200,000,000 to provide physical improvements to Cincinnati Public Schools. The Cincinnati Public Schools will be paid \$5,000,000 per year by the City of Cincinnati for twenty years. Implementation of this commitment is expected to begin by the year 2000. Qualified Zone Academy Bonds will be used to further leverage existing commitments to the public schools.

- **Example:** Academy bonds will be used to complete physical repairs and technology upgrades for each of the 14 public schools in 15 structures within the Zone. Priority will be given to safety, deferred maintenance, expansions to eliminate over crowded conditions, and facility enhancements. Turner Construction Company completed a detailed analysis of renovation costs for the Cincinnati Public Schools. The renovation costs for the schools within the Cincinnati Empowerment Zone is approximately \$76,000,000, not including the replacement costs for Rothenberg School. This report was updated to reflect 1998 costs.

In addition, Cincinnati Bell, a Community Partner, will house and manage the implementation of the Metropolitan Area Network (MAN) within the zone. In this role, Cincinnati Bell will complete a telecommunications plans for each public school at the estimated cost of \$9,200 per facility. This represents an in-kind commitment of approximately \$138,000 for these 15 structures. Additional business partners are being sought to qualify these improvements under the QZAB program.

Relocation of the School for Creative and Performing Arts (SCPA) is a major capital project that will be implemented using QZAB financing. SCPA is a nationally renowned public arts education center serving grades four through twelve. The current building is substandard due to its physical condition, size,

and location and has been documented as one of the priority facilities for replacement by the Cincinnati Board of Education.

Eric Kunzel, Director of the Cincinnati Pops Orchestra, had the vision of creating an art campus within the Cincinnati Empowerment Zone by relocating SCPA near Music Hall. This campus will also include Memorial Hall, Emery Hall, Washington Elementary School, Washington Park, and the Classical Music Hall of Fame. Such a move will give the students direct access to professionals during their formative educational development years and create a synergy of art resources in Over-the-Rhine.

Kunzel's vision has captured the interest of the regional arts community and a fund-raising structure is in the planning process. The Greater Cincinnati Arts and Education Center is the new non-profit organization established to implement the arts campus. Norma Peterson, executive director, states that a feasibility study is under way to identify the financing options to implement this \$195 to \$200 million project. A major fund-raising campaign is planned for this project, however, it is premature to identify the exact level of the campaign. The replacement cost for SCPA, per the Turner Construction Report, is approximately \$95 million. Ms. Peterson further states that a portion of the arts campus fund-raising resources will be directed to the relocation of SCPA. This will leverage the Academy bond financing to implement this bold arts campus vision in the Cincinnati Empowerment Zone serving the Greater Cincinnati Region.

### ***State and Local Tax Credits***

The State of Ohio and the City of Cincinnati utilize a number of existing tax credit programs to assist business and housing development and the rehabilitation of historic structures. Combining these existing tax credit programs with the resources available through Empowerment Zone designation dramatically increases the opportunity

for comprehensive redevelopment within the Zone.

### ***Ohio Urban Jobs and Enterprise Zone Program***

**Real and Personal Property Tax Incentives:** Provides for real and/or personal property tax exemption of approximately 40 percent up to 10 years for business projects that combine qualified new investments with job creation or retention. Taxes due to the Cincinnati School District are not abated and must be paid directly to the district. In July 1998, the City of Cincinnati expanded the Enterprise Zone program to include all of the census tracts in the proposed Empowerment Zone. The State of Ohio subsequently certified Cincinnati's expanded Enterprise Zone.

Current City policy limits tax abatements for retail projects to the Over the Rhine community. A proposal is underway to extend tax abatements for retail projects to each of the neighborhoods in the proposed Empowerment Zone. Such a policy will assist in achieving the goal to revitalize the neighborhood business districts (NBDs) within the Zone. Revitalized NBDs will provide quality goods and services close to home for Zone residents and serve as employment and business investment centers.

### ***Ohio Urban Jobs and Enterprise Zone Program***

**State Franchise Tax Incentives - Program** may provide eligible businesses with an existing Enterprise Zone Agreement with additional benefits in the form of State of Ohio Franchise Tax Incentives.

### ***Cincinnati Job Creation Income Tax Credit***

The City's Job Creation Tax Credit was created for companies that create at least 25 jobs in the City within 3 years of adoption of an agreement. This tax credit is contingent upon participation with the state of Ohio Income Tax Credit program.

### ***State of Ohio Job Creation Income Tax Credit***

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A refundable corporation franchise or state income tax credit for businesses that create at least 25 jobs within 3 years in Ohio. The tax credit is based on the amount of new State income tax revenue due to the new employees. The percentage of the incentive is decided by the State of Ohio Tax Credit Commission and has averaged 60 percent for 8 years. By refunding a portion of the tax revenue that is created by the company's newly employed persons, the company has more capital to invest in the relocation or expansion of its facilities.

### ***Community Reinvestment Area Tax Exemptions***

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The *Ohio Revised Code*: Chapter 3735, permits the City to create a "community reinvestment area" (CRA) within its corporation limits. The owner of any real property in a CRA may file an application for property tax abatement for any increased property valuation resulting from new construction or remodeling of existing structures.

### ***Urban Redevelopment/Tax Increment Financing***

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The *Ohio Revised Code*: Chapter 5709, permits the City to declare, by ordinance, that certain improvements to real City-owned property has public purpose and will be exempt from real property taxation.

### ***Urban Renewal Debt Retirement Fund/Tax Increment Financing***

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The *Ohio Revised Code*: Chapter 725 enables the City's use of tax increment financing for the redevelopment of blighted areas. The City enters into an agreement with a property owner to make improvements to property located in an urban renewal area. The City issues bonds to finance the project's redevelopment activities. Rather than pay the increased property taxes, which would otherwise be assessed on the improvements, the property owner makes semiannual "urban renewal service payments" which are used to repay the bonds. An Urban Renewal Debt Retirement Fund

is established and serves as a repository for these semiannual payments.

### ***Manufacturing Machinery and Equipment Investment Tax Credit***

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A non-refundable corporate franchise or state income tax credit for a taxpayer that purchases new manufacturing machinery and equipment that it locates in Ohio and uses for manufacturing.

### ***Research and Development Tax Credit***

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A sales tax exemption for machinery and equipment used in research and development.

### ***Ohio Export Tax Credit***

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A non-refundable franchise tax credit for corporate or individual taxpayers who increase export sales, if they also increase either Ohio payroll or Ohio capital expenditures.

### ***Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credits***

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Incentives to support the rehabilitation of historic and older buildings. These credits reduce the amount of income tax owed. The 20 percent rehabilitation tax credit equals 20 percent of the amount spent in a *certified rehabilitation* of a *certified historic structure*. The 10 percent rehabilitation tax credit equals 10 percent of the amount spent to rehabilitate a *non-historic building* built before 1936. These tax credits will directly support the rehabilitation of historic and older structures in the Cincinnati Empowerment Zone because 59 percent of its housing units were built before 1939 and Over-the-Rhine is the largest Federal Historic District in the country.

### ***Low-Income Housing Tax Credits***

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This program is designed to increase the supply of quality affordable housing throughout the country. Credits are used to offset an individual's or corporation's federal income tax liability. The amount of Housing Credit received can be subtracted on a dollar-for-dollar basis from the federal income tax liability. Housing Credits are received each year for up to 10 years and the owner must maintain the low-income use continuously for 15 years. The owner must also enter into an extended use period of an additional 15 years by filing a restrictive covenant on the



project with the County Recorder. Only 18 percent of Zone residents live in owner occupied units, 45 percent of the population lives in poverty, and 28 percent of the households receive public assistance. These factors demonstrate the need for a solid supply of affordable housing in the Cincinnati Empowerment Zone.

and elsewhere, the Zone strategy contains several related initiatives that are designed to develop marketing materials and the expertise of Zone staff to effectively utilize these resources.

### *Use of Tax Incentives for Cincinnati EZ Developable Sites*

The Cincinnati Empowerment Zone includes the following three non-contiguous developable sites:

- IAMS-Swifton Commons-Vine Street Dump and vicinity
- Blue Ash Airport development site
- Conrail site

These sites were chosen outside of the Empowerment Zone boundary to increase the available land for business development and expansion for Zone businesses while providing additional employment opportunities for Zone residents. Each site was chosen for its business development potential, connection to regional resources, and its relationship to federal initiatives. These sites provide approximately 640 acres of business and industrial zoned land for development.

- **Example**—The Blue Ash Airport Development Site is owned by the City of Cincinnati, offers a rare opportunity to create a Joint Economic Development Zone (JEDZ) for business expansion and job growth benefiting Cincinnati and Blue Ash. The 100 acre non-aviation use site is also within a quarter mile of the proposed Light Rail Transit Line making future jobs easily accessible to Cincinnati Empowerment Zone residents.

This site will be developed using a multiplicity of federal, state and local resources, including key Zone related federal resources such as the tax-exempt bond financing, the increased section 179 deductions, and the employment related tax credits for hiring welfare recipients and other targeted groups. As noted earlier